Overview
Hawai‘i Environmental Protection Programs Strategic Plan

Introduction

The Hawai‘i Department of Health’s (DOH) managers and staff recognize the need to continuously improve our environmental management practices and policies. Our environmental protection program has set out to fundamentally change our approach to environmental management. We have streamlined our permitting, and we use risk assessments and a priority-setting system to focus on environmental problems of greater magnitude.

New approach to environmental management

DOH has developed environmental goals for its programs. Specific benchmarks for each goal allow progress to be clearly measured; the programs can be accountable for attaining these goals. Program managers within the Department initially developed the goals, in consultation with their staffs. The goals were reviewed by our Environmental Management Advisory Group to ensure that the objectives which we set and the manner in which we carry out our responsibilities meet the needs of the Hawai‘i community.

We are pleased with the progress our environmental programs have made, and are excited about the vision, mission, goals, and strategies that have been identified as we move forward with new approaches for protecting Hawai‘i’s unique environment.

Both the plans of individual programs and this introductory chapter were developed through extensive consultation among DOH staffs and with numerous stakeholders in the environmental protection process. The following chapters consist of plans drawn up by each of DOH’s environmental protection branches and offices.

Proactive Pollution Prevention

By finding ways to prevent pollution, we avoid performing costly clean-ups. Community volunteers, for example, paint signs alerting people that all things dumped into sewers go to the ocean. As all of us learn how to prevent pollution, we become better equipped to care for our environment.

Plans created in consultation with stakeholders

Background

Historical Perspective

Federal laws sometimes more appropriate for the continental U.S.

Since the 1970s, laws have been passed for the protection of our nation's environment. These national laws include: the Clean Air Act to protect air quality, the Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) to protect coastal and inland surface waters, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA or Superfund) to protect the environment from hazardous substances, and the Safe Drinking Water Act to protect the quality of drinking water. These laws led our State to develop environmental pollution programs with a mandate and mission to protect and enhance environmental quality for the people of Hawai'i.

However, the standards and policies required by these federal laws have sometimes been more appropriate for the continental United States. The State of Hawai'i must continue to be active in the formation of national environmental policies to ensure applicability to Hawai'i's unique environment. Effort and resources must be directed to activities that result in quantifiable and significant public health and environmental benefits in Hawai'i.

As an island state, Hawai'i's people and environment are unique compared to those in the continental United States. That requires that we also be unique in our approach to protection of our environment and natural resources. We must be able to develop our environmental protection programs in the manner that best protects our unique and diverse environmental resources.

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Over the past few decades, we have become witnesses to how fragile our environment is through the emergence of various environmental problems and events including:

Water contamination *In the early 1980s, the pesticides ethylene dibromide (EDB), dibromo-chloropropane (DBCP) and trichloropropane (TCP) were detected in Central O'ahu drinking water wells. Additional contaminants including atrazine, dieldrin, hexazinone, tetrachloroethylene, trichloroethylene, chlordane and others have been detected in our water supplies in different areas of the State. These incidents show that our groundwater resources are vulnerable to chemical contamination. We have become more vigilant in our efforts to monitor the quality of our drinking water (drinking water monitoring parameters have increased from 23 to more than 83), as well as in our efforts to prevent its contamination (through the implementation of preventive efforts such as the source water protection program).*

Coastal water pollution *In 1989, the Exxon Houston broke its mooring off Barbers Point, causing an oil spill which impacted the West O'ahu coastline. The University of Hawai'i released a study in 1993 which concluded that a major oil spill in Hawai'i would cost the state billions of dollars. Hawai'i's dependency on imported oil makes us vulnerable to a major oil spill. The Hawai'i State Legislature passed a five-cent per barrel tax on petroleum products to fund an oil spill planning, preparedness, prevention and response program.*
In 1996, a Chevron pipeline leaked, spilling more than 20,000 gallons of

fuel oil into Pearl Harbor. An extensive cleanup effort, costing millions of dollars, involved multiple agencies and parties. As a result, the Hawai'i State Legislature passed a bill authorizing the department to implement a Pipeline Safety Program in an effort to prevent future spills.

Oil spill into Pearl Harbor led to Pipeline Safety Program

Air pollution *In 1995, refineries at Campbell Industrial Park inadvertently released pollutants that impacted neighboring businesses and residences. This provided first hand evidence of the potential impacts when residential development encroaches on and begins to merge with industrial activities. To meet this challenge, a coordinator was hired to improve communication among industries and neighboring residential developments as these potentially incompatible land uses have become increasingly integrated.*

Continued population increases in our state have resulted in conflicting land-use decisions and an incremental degradation of our natural environment. Land is being removed from agricultural and conservation zoning to meet our growing housing needs. This has led to deteriorated watersheds, decreased recharge of our groundwater aquifers, and increased erosion of our land, causing runoff and sedimentation that pollute our coastal waters. The competition for limited land has brought potentially polluting sources into close proximity with our valued natural resources.

Proactive and strategic planning have become all the more crucial. Hawai'i has invested heavily in planning in recent years, through such efforts as the Hawai'i Environmental Risk Ranking Project and two goal-setting reports produced in 1994 (Goals, Strategies and Benchmarks for DOH Environmental Management Programs) and 1996 (The State of Environmental Protection in Hawai'i).

Last year, we revisited our analysis of residual risks, defining issues which we believe are not being addressed adequately. Some, such as cesspool failures, polluted runoff from roads, and increased operation of illegal dumps fall under DOH's purview. Others, such as the contamination of our streams and aquifers by pesticides, require collaboration with other government agencies. This fresh look at our universe of environmental problems prompted changes in our planning, which are reflected in this document.

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Organizational Structure

The environmental management programs represent a small portion of the Department of Health. Of the department's several thousand personnel, the environmental programs comprise approximately 400 staff at any given time. Figure 1 displays the organizational chart for the environmental health section of the department. This plan reflects the work of the entire Environmental Management Division, the Environmental Planning Office, the Hazard Evaluation and Emergency Response Office, and the Noise, Radiation and Indoor Air Quality Branch within the Environmental Health Services Division.

Types of DOH environmental programs

Environmental Health Administration

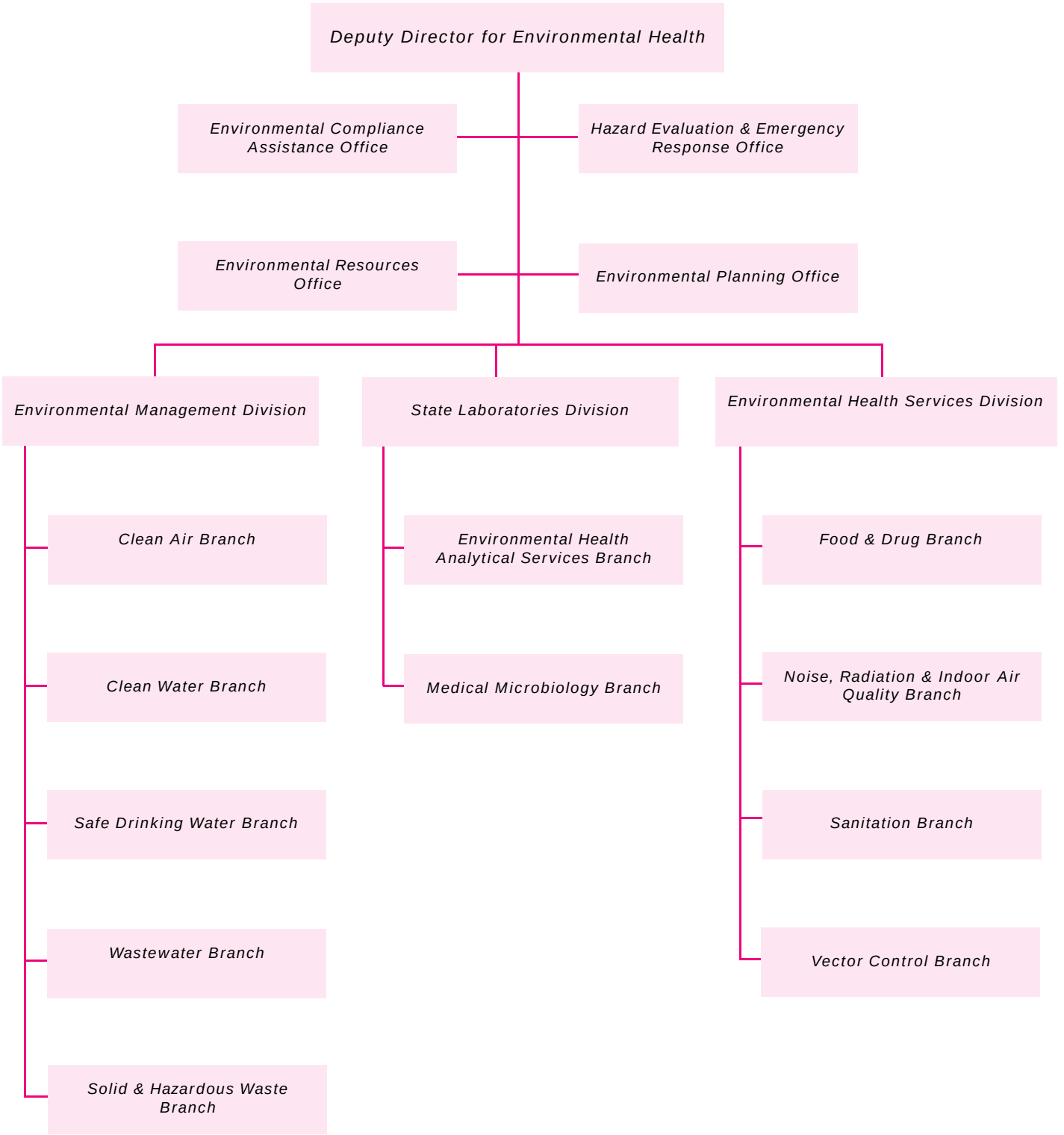

Fig. 1
December 1998

Legal authority

Most of our federal funding comes from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). We work very closely with our regional EPA office in San Francisco to ensure that federal laws and regulations established for environmental protection are carried out in the most effective manner possible for Hawai'i. While Congress has given EPA authority to implement federal laws, EPA has delegated many of those responsibilities to Hawai'i.

EPA policies have a strong impact on our activities, whether or not the state has delegated responsibility. Constant communication with our EPA counterparts in San Francisco is the norm, and semiannual planning sessions have become our standard practice. We have requested and received comments from EPA on our strategic planning efforts, which have been incorporated into this report.

EPA delegation of pollution control authority

Through program delegation, often called "primacy," EPA delegates to DOH the authority to carry out a pollution control program required by a federal law. Fully delegated programs include the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program in the Clean Water Branch, the safe drinking water program in the Safe Drinking Water Branch, and the landfill and incinerator permit programs in the Solid and Hazardous Waste Branch. Additional water, waste and air permit programs, including Underground Injection Control, Underground Storage Tanks, Hazardous Waste, Sewage Sludge Management and Clean Air Covered Sources, are in the process of being delegated under the following criteria:

- *State laws and rules shall be equal to or more stringent than federal laws and rules;*
- *States shall have adequate resources to fulfill the requirements of the program activities necessary to implement and enforce state and federal laws and rules; and*
- *States shall report to EPA on their compliance with program requirements and shall be subject to audit.*

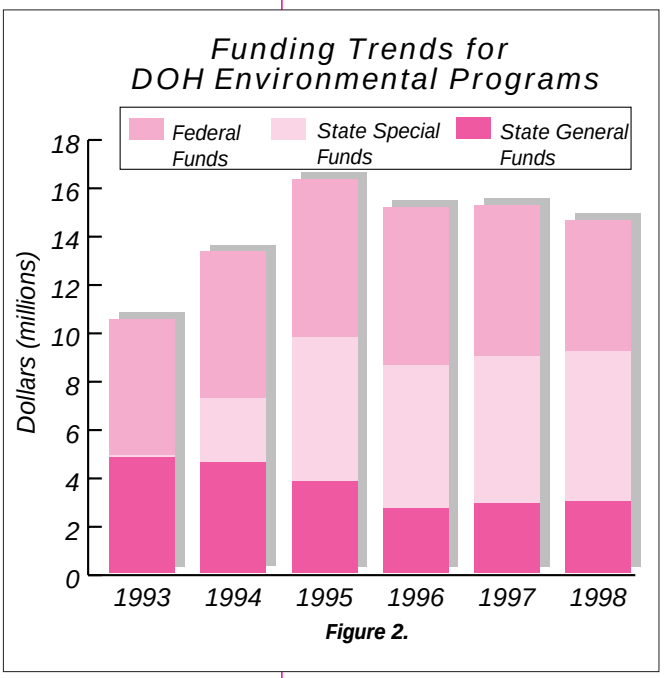

Figure 2.

Program delegation gives DOH the authority to: (1) customize EPA's national programs for state use, provided that minimum federal requirements for program implementation are met; (2) process and sign permit applications with minimum EPA oversight; and (3) take the lead in enforcement actions that result from documented violations of permit conditions, and pursue violations arising from activities that do not require permits. Program delegation makes DOH the lead agency for processing permits; EPA retains only a reviewer role.

State laws must be equal or stronger than federal ones

Cost savings for both the state and permittees result from tailoring delegated programs to state needs. By carrying out review and approval of applications within the state rather than at EPA, processing time is reduced.

Funding

When we analyze effectiveness, we must always consider the resources available to get the job done. Figure 2 shows the trend in DOH's environmental protection funding over the past several years. While state general funds have dropped precipitously, special and federal funds increased significantly. Our strategy is to shift program support costs from state general funds to special funds, where possible and appropriate. Federally-mandated programs often have relatively fixed federal funding and increasing responsibilities. Some programs such as the Clean Air Program, which regulates major sources of emissions, are almost entirely funded with special funds. In general, federal funding levels are established state-by-state by the use of federal pass-through formulas, not by local program priorities. DOH has come to rely heavily on special funds to address the expanding responsibilities we face; we expect this trend to continue.

Public/Private Partnerships

Partnership formed with the community and with businesses allow DOH to ensure a higher level of environmental protection. For example, our partners can help by monitoring the quality of our streams, or by participating in beach and stream clean-ups.

Strategic Issues

DOH staff does not have sole responsibility, nor the capacity, to accomplish our ambitious Vision and Mission independently. Nonetheless, we strive to play the strongest role possible. As we embrace this challenge, we recognize the necessity of enlisting support from the larger Hawai'i community. When the citizenry of our state becomes more aware of the status of Hawai'i's environment, we believe we will be more effective in reaching these shared objectives.

Management Principles

DOH's management principles represent our priorities in doing business as a public service agency. While our job includes much more than the principles listed, we emphasize these principles because they go beyond standard operating procedures to reach a higher level of excellence. Our management principles are threefold: Public/Private Partnerships, Risk-based Management, and Proactive Pollution Reduction. These three principles provide a common focus for all DOH programs, and are applied consistently across program activities.

Public/Private Partnerships

Partnerships with community groups and business organizations ensure that DOH maintains open lines of communication, for a clearer understanding of the decisions made on behalf of environmental protection. Through community-based advisory groups, DOH collaborates with numerous stakeholders on a variety of issues, most recently in this goal-setting effort. DOH also supports protection efforts sponsored and led by community groups formed to deal with issues important to those in the areas.

Strategic Issues Overview

Vision
An island environment that is clean and safe

Mission
To Protect and enhance evnironmental quality for the people of Hawai'i

Management Principles
- *Public/private partnerships*
- *Risk-Based management*
- *Proactive pollution reduction*

The Environmental Management Advisory Group is a mutual partnership formed by DOH. The group is composed of representatives from a cross section of the public who interface most frequently with environmental concerns. The task force has advised us during our goal setting process, extensively reviewed and commented on our Strategic Plan, and designed a communication plan which will enable the Department to conduct public outreach efforts so that the entire Hawai'i community can be a partner in reaching Hawai'i's environmental goals. This outreach will enable the Department to communicate its goals to broad segments of the population, and we'll use the feedback to ensure that the Department's goals are in harmony with the needs of our state. The Department hopes that as these goals achieve public acceptance, there will be an equal degree of public involvement in their implementation so that all citizens can play a role in achieving greater environmental protection. This task force represents a unique approach to environmental goal setting; it has provided a forum through which the Department's goals can be reviewed and revised in accordance with such "real world" feedback.

Risk-Based Management

Risk-based management means solving the biggest risks, or threats, to public health and ecosystems before expending time and expertise on less threatening situations. Government often reacts to crises whenever they arise, resulting in shooting at targets before taking careful aim. Attention-grabbing headlines often proclaim newly found environmental catastrophes. But a shocking headline does not always indicate a true health threat.

The solution to this dilemma is to aim, then shoot. Consider the risk (or threat) to public health and the environment when deciding which problems to address and in what order. If careful examination of an environmental crisis reveals a serious problem, then solving that problem becomes a priority. If not, other, higher risk issues are top priority.

Focusing protection efforts on the highest risk issues means more serious problems are solved first. For example, our community risk-ranking project identified a public concern regarding indoor air quality; our response was to establish an indoor air quality program. This risk-based approach can be applied every day, as multiple issues arise. Attempting to solve all of them at once would dissipate our resources–an ineffective approach. Risk-based decisionmaking evaluates the balance of the economic impact of environmental protection with the level of risk involved, to avoid overspending on problems with little or no risk to people or the environment.

Proactive Pollution Reduction

Pollution can be dangerous to those exposed to toxic materials, can harm wildlife and sensitive ecosystems, and is clearly a drain on our economy. When we stop pollution from being created in the first place, we are always better off. DOH has chosen to set as a priority the proactive reduction of pollution as our preferred approach. Our policies favor prevention over clean up, and we encourage reuse over disposal.

HAWAI'I ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS

AIR QUALITY . . .
To Protect and enhance Hawai'i's air quality for the health of our people.

LAND . . .
To protect Hawai'i's land from pollutants that endanger people and the environment, and to rehabilitate contaminated lands.

GROUNDWATER . . .
To protect Hawaii's groundwater from contamination for drinking, irrigation and other appropriate uses.

INLAND WATER . . .
To protect and restore the quality of Hawai'i's streams, wetlands, estuaries and other inland waters for fish and wildlife, recreation, aesthetic enjoyment and other appropriate uses.

COASTAL WATER . . .
To ensure that Hawai'i's coastal waters are safe and healthy for people, plants and animals.

Risk-Based Management

This illegal dump could pose a serious risk if the barrels contain a highly toxic material, and if people are exposed. High risk situations are a high priority for DOH to address. If the barrels are empty, and no one can access the site, then the risk is lower .

Deterence is the goal, backed by effective enforcement

When promoting pollution reduction or remediating past contamination problems, we seek to ensure that the best available technology is employed. For those cases where an environmental violation has been identified, we maintain a rigorous and effective enforcement program to deter future occurrences.

Challenges

Citizen education an important component

Everyone needs to take responsibility for the condition of Hawai'i's environment. To obtain information from the public on locations and types of environmental pollution that they want solved, and to educate citizens on some of the technical aspects of environmental management, DOH must expand its community-based environmental management programs, while maintaining the basic regulatory programs.

We are working for flexibility to carry out our federally-delegated programs on the basis of environmental priorities; the challenge is to carry out our mandate to implement EPA's regulatory programs in Hawai'i while involving the public through education and outreach.

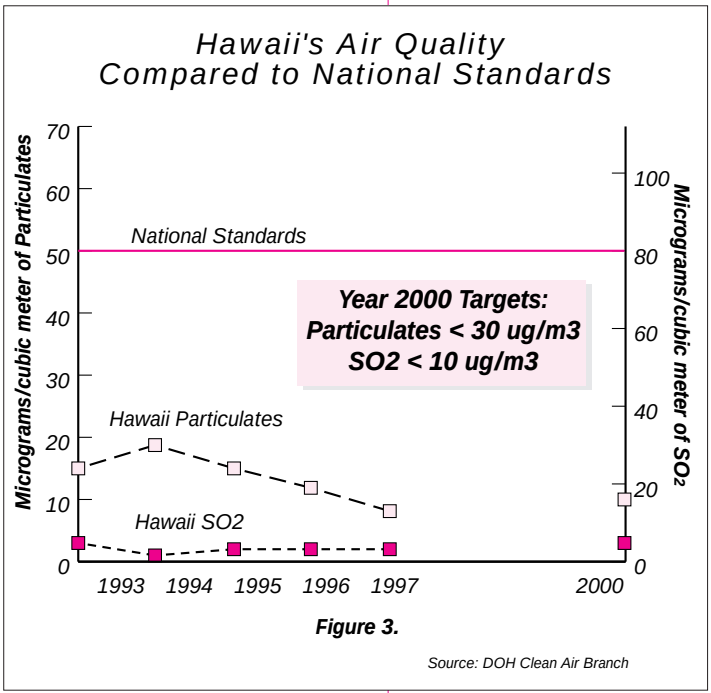

Figure 3.

Source: DOH Clean Air Branch

Environmental Goals

In pursuit of our mission, the Department of Health has adopted five broad goals for protecting Hawaii's air, lands, and waters.

To meet the challenge of each of these goals, our environmental programs have developed plans identifying how Hawai'i's air, lands, and waters will be protected. These plans show where we have been, where we expect to be (objectives), how we will get there (strategies), and how we know that we have reached our goals and objectives (indicators). The objectives we have developed are focused on improving management and control programs by using indicators that, for the most part, are aimed at measuring environmental quality and reducing the amount of waste generated or released into our environment.

Five goals to protect Hawai' i environment

Air Quality

Hawai'i's skies are an example of how beautiful the air above us can be. Hawai'i is blessed with being a set of islands, and is not impacted by pollution from neighboring states. Because we have little heavy industry, our sources of manmade pollution are relatively few. However, as with any state that has metropolitan areas, we have some industrial sources of air pollution. We regulate and monitor these sources. Special monitoring equipment has been installed around some of our larger sources to identify problems, provide early warning of unplanned releases to communities, and prevent future releases. The largest source of air pollution in Hawai'i is volcanic emissions from Kilauea on the island of Hawai'i. Special monitors have also been placed around the island to inform neighboring communities when volcanic air pollution is particularly heavy.

Evidence of Hawai'i's overall high air quality can be seen in Figure 3. Levels of particulates (dust) and sulphur dioxide near our largest industrial area are far below those which the federal government has set for concern. Indeed, air quality in this area surpasses federal standards by 44% for particulates, and by 98% for sulphur dioxide.

Volcanic emissions are the largest air pollution source

Releases of toxic chemicals into the air have been steadily dropping in recent years, as shown in Figure 4. Our target for the year 2000 for all air quality measures is to prevent any increase in pollutant levels. Attaining level emissions will be a challenge, considering the projected increase in population.

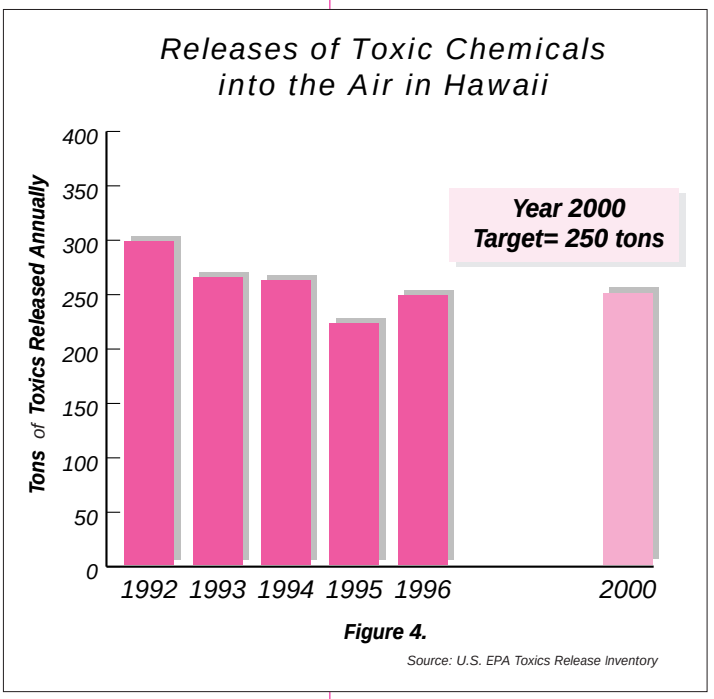

Figure 4.

Source: U.S. EPA Toxics Release Inventory

Land

Protecting land from pollution is central to preserving our entire natural environment. Pollutants that spill onto land inevitably evaporate into the air, seep into our groundwater aquifers, or flow into our streams and then to the ocean. Toxins that are left behind can threaten the health of those that are exposed. Through more prudent use of hazardous materials and enforcement of laws governing such substances, we are confident we will reduce the risk of harm to our people and our environment.

DOH concentrates first on reducing the source of pollutants that might contaminate the land, and then on limiting the places and ways toxins can find their way onto our lands. Decreased generation of wastes, especially hazardous wastes as shown in Figure 5, is the best way to avoid problems with waste later. The next best scenario is to reuse or recycle the waste, as displayed in Figure 6. We have seen a steady increase in the percentage of solid waste that is reused or recycled. As recycling increases, so too does the amount of waste diverted from our landfills. Thus, less land is required for landfills.

In those cases where waste does spill onto land and cause problems, timely cleanup is required. As you can see in Figure 7, great strides have been made in cleaning up underground storage tank sites. Since 1993, the UST program has overseen the cleanup of almost 300 sites where underground storage tanks were leaking. A target level of 100 sites restored annually is the goal for the near future, until we get ahead of the curve and have fewer sites that need cleaning.

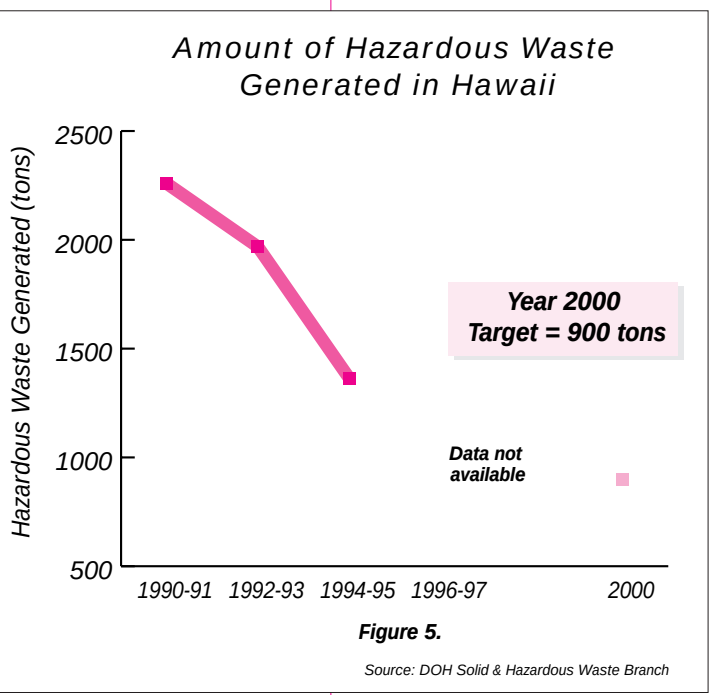

Figure 5.

Source: DOH Solid & Hazardous Waste Branch

Challenge is to prevent further aquifer contamination

Groundwater

Groundwater, the hidden source of 95% of our drinking water, might seem safe from problems because it is buried deep beneath the surface. With time, however, many substances spilled on, or applied to, the land can seep through the surface into our valuable aquifers—many substances already have. Traces of pesticides, fertilizers and other chemicals have been found in many of Hawai'i's aquifers. Most of that contamination originated from the use of pesticides and from other practices which occurred decades ago.

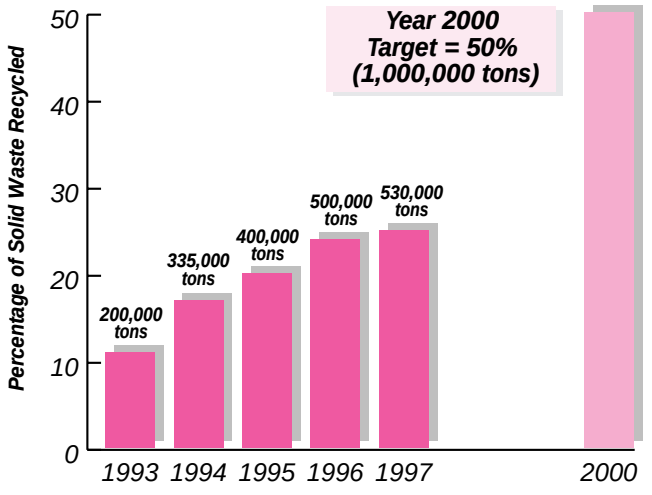

Figure 6.

Source: DOH Office of Solid Waste

Our challenge is to prevent further contamination to our aquifers. One of the best techniques for protecting our well water is to safeguard the area around a well. Because activities within a well's zone of influence may lead to contamination of the groundwater, we take special care to shield the wellhead and surrounding area from exposure to dangerous chemicals.

Because some of the contaminated aquifers are sources of drinking water, we must oversee the protection, treatment and cleanup of groundwater to assure it is safe to drink. Our monitoring program ensures contaminants are detected when they appear, and are removed before drinking water is distributed to homes and businesses. The next chart, Figure 8, indicates the number of people who receive treated groundwater. Thirteen percent of people drinking water from public systems receive water that requires chemical removal and disinfection in order to make it safe to drink. Roughly one-half of the population drinks water that is chlorinated to some extent, often to prevent growth of bacteria during storage. That leaves about a third of the community receiving water which is safe as it is and requires no treatment whatsoever.

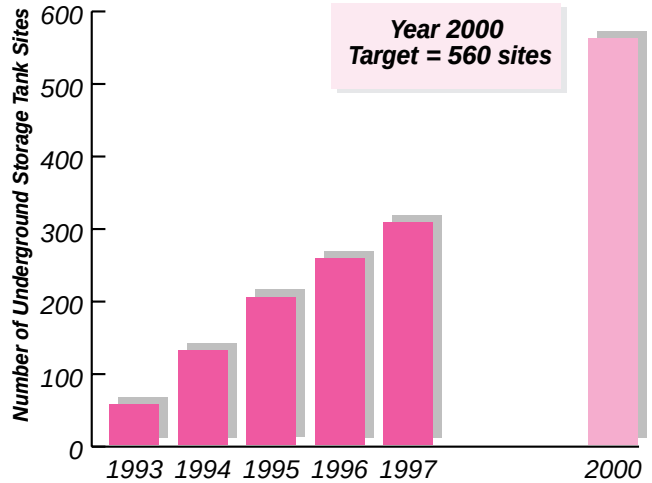

Figure 7.

Source: DOH Solid & Hazardous Waste

Inland Water

The DOH increasingly focuses its attention toward upstream sources of pollution. To protect coastal waters, the inland waters that flow to the ocean must also be protected. The lands adjacent to inland waters must be managed well, too, if we hope to keep our inland water bodies safe to enjoy. We collaborate with community groups and other government agencies to promote sound land management practices and protective water quality measures. By responding quickly to tips received from our citizens, we can address pollution problems promptly. Through managing the pollutant inputs to our streams and waterways, we are confident we will see improved water quality in our inland waters.

Coastal Water

Hawai'i's coastal waters are valued by our residents, visitors, and those who harvest its bounty. By keeping a watchful eye on our recreational coastal areas, DOH protects the public from exposure to unsafe conditions. Routine monitoring ensures that water in our near-coastal areas is safe and clean. If a sewage or chemical release taints a swimming area, DOH investigates and orders that signs be posted to close the area (see Figure 9). We also regularly inspect wastewater treatment plants to ensure that they are operating properly (to reduce the incidence of sewage spills). These facilities have shown improvement since 1993 in meeting our operation and maintenance requirements, as displayed in Figure 10. In addition to compliance inspections, we strongly promote recycling of treated water through financial incentives and funding of effluent reuse projects. Figure 11 shows the steady advance in recycling, and our ambitious target of 25% reuse by the year 2000.

Coastal waters are a Hawai'i treasure

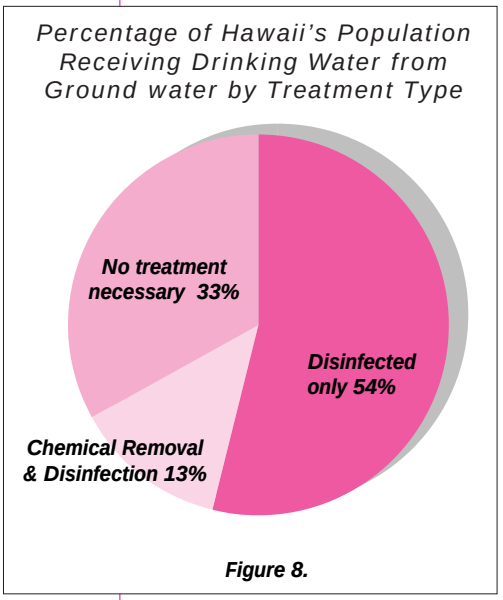

Figure 8.

Ecological Protection

As a public health agency, DOH is mandated to protect the environment to ensure that human health is not compromised. However, environmental protection also includes protection of our ecosystems. Unhealthy conditions for ecosystems often spell trouble for human health as well. DOH's efforts to protect ecosystems are exemplified in our water quality pollution control and management programs.

Water quality improvements are meant to enhance chemical, physical and biological characteristics of a water body. However, water quality improvement efforts are often measured only by evaluation of chemical water quality constituents (such as nutrients) or physical sources of degradation (such as sedimentation or temperature). The aquatic life inhabiting a water body can also be used as a measure of "health" of a water body. This is because the community of plants and animals reflects both past and present chemical and physical conditions of the water body. Plant and animal community composition is influenced by both natural processes and human-caused impacts. In general, with increasing watershed degradation, there is a decrease in the biological integrity of the community of plants and animals inhabiting a stream. A method to evaluate the biological integrity of streams in Hawai'i is being developed at DOH.

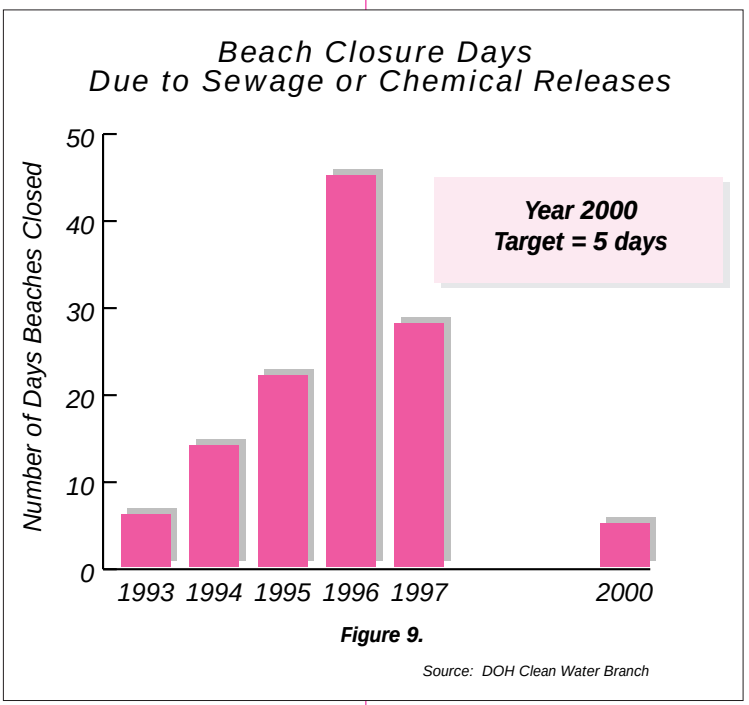

Figure 9.

Source: DOH Clean Water Branch

Multimedia Issues

Ancient Hawaiians practiced a form of resource management focused around watersheds, or ahupua'a. By emphasizing the relationship among the elements within an ahupua'a, they recognized that stream water quality cannot be addressed apart from the condition of the land, and that whatever occurs inland from the coastal areas often impacts the beaches and coral reefs. Modern environmental managers have rediscovered the value of this approach, and DOH has adopted it as well.

Department promotes watershed management initiatives

Watershed-Based Management

For environmental management to be successful, it must become everyone's responsibility. We encourage community groups, especially, to enter into partnerships with agencies at the federal, state and county level of government in order to identify problems and recommend and help implement solutions to a variety of local needs in the areas of water, air, and waste management. The department has begun to play a significant role in initiating and encouraging these watershed management initiatives. Two recent projects stand out as "success stories" - the West Maui and the Ala Wai Canal Watershed Management Projects. Both projects brought together a wide variety of interested parties from the targeted watersheds in order to both determine the source of the problems and to propose solutions. In West Maui, after in-depth studies were conducted, a watershed "owners' manual" was produced to outline the issues and propose ways all of the potential owners could help to address the challenges faced. In the Ala Wai Canal watershed, an extensive community visioning process was held to identify community environmental values and incorporate them into any conclusions. The Ala Wai effort continues through a process of providing small grants to community groups so they can implement appropriate solutions for their areas.

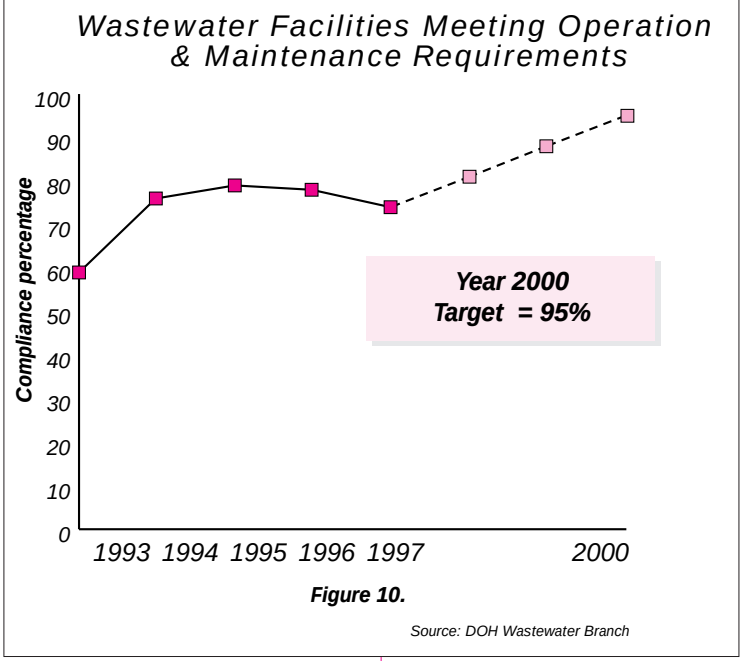

Figure 10.

Source: DOH Wastewater Branch

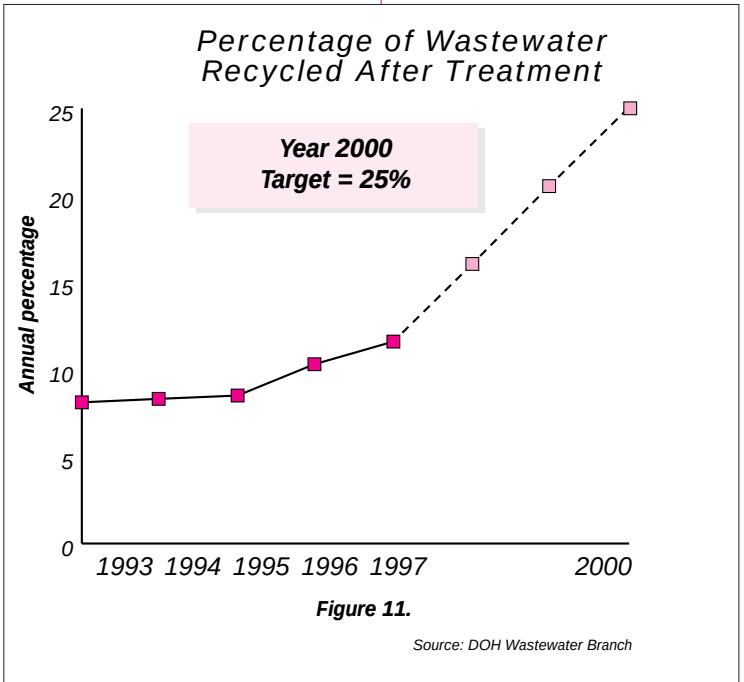

Figure 11.

Source: DOH Wastewater Branch

Another watershed-based project, the Source Water Protection Program Plan, relies on extensive public outreach and community involvement in order to define and implement voluntary groundwater protection measures in the areas around drinking water wells and surface sources of drinking water to prevent potential pollutants from entering our potable water supplies.

Major challenges still exist before we accomplish and expand watershed management initiatives statewide. DOH will continue to support community-based initiatives for watershed-based management.

Source Water Protection Program Plan relies on public outreach

Program Integration

In order for multimedia solutions to be put into practice, individual programs within DOH must work together to accomplish a unified goal. The project in the Ala Wai Canal watershed is a good example of DOH's use of this approach. A list of issues to be addressed in the watershed was drawn up, and each program selected those components of the work that the staff could accomplish.

Regulatory Compliance

Within DOH compliance means ensuring that everyone meets the pollution control requirements described in federal and state law, and has both voluntary and regulatory aspects. Our policy is to promote voluntary compliance by educating permit holders and others on basic regulatory requirements, and attempting to solve problems before they reach the enforcement stage. For example, DOH has recently established an Environmental Compliance Assistance Office for the purpose of providing a point of access for small businesses, facilitating communications with the small business community, and helping to resolve disputes among small businesses, DOH and EPA.

Advisory committees help assure rules are equitable

To ensure that administrative rules are equitable and drafted from the point of view of problem-solving, DOH has customarily formed advisory committees that include representatives from groups affected by the proposed rules. In this way, the regulated community can assist in designing rules that facilitate compliance rather than make it difficult for permit holders and others to meet the requirements.

When enforcement is necessary, we apply a recent enforcement agreement entered into with EPA that clarifies the relative roles and responsibilities of DOH and EPA in carrying out enforcement actions in the state. A total of 46 positions are allocated to enforcement in the federally-funded branches as follows: Clean Water (4); Safe Drinking Water (4); Wastewater (7); Clean Air (16); Solid & Hazardous Waste (8); and Noise, Radiation & Indoor Air Quality (7). In general, DOH is the lead agency for enforcement actions taken within fully delegated programs; EPA is the lead agency for the non-delegated programs. As more programs are delegated, more of the responsibility for enforcement will fall to the state. Penalty policies have been developed by all delegated programs to ensure that penalties are consistently and appropriately applied.

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Interagency Coordination

In addition to integration within DOH, other government agencies at the state, federal and county level play a role in managing our environment. Where those responsibilities overlap, coordination is required to get the job done efficiently. DOH collaborates with agencies at all levels through interagency task forces (on such issues as coastal zone management, soil runoff, and land use planning), and with our own advisory group, called the Environmental Management Advisory Group, which includes, in addition to community members, representatives of numerous state, federal and county agencies. Examples of linkages among state agencies with environmental management responsibilities, especially the Departments of Agriculture and Land & Natural Resources, and the Coastal Zone Management Program in the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, are given in the individual program plans which follow this chapter.

Permit Streamlining

Streamlined permits remove inappropriate barriers

Certain activities require a permit from DOH before execution. Reviewing and approving viable applications takes time, and is a necessary part of the environmental protection process. However, lenghty review of projects that will not cause environmental protection concerns can lead to unwanted delays. DOH has found ways to remove inappropriate barriers from activities that were unduly delayed under the previous permit system.

General permits help streamline process

We have instituted a "permit by rule" approach for certain activities that require compliance with environmental laws without the use of a protracted permitting process. This approach dramatically speeds up the approval process for activities with minor impacts that are carried out in a number of different locations.

Another change in the permitting process for certain activities is the use of a "general permit." This practice requires applicants to obtain a permit for the general type of activity, but they are not required to obtain a special permit tailored to the specific activity. A person who violates the rule or the general permit is subject to the same penalties as the person who violates an individual permit. These new approaches will allow permitting staff to spend more time in the field evaluating both compliance and the effectiveness of existing controls.

DOH's permit streamlining activities are coordinated with those of other agencies, especially the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, in a proactive approach to ensuring that efficiency is achieved without compromising environmental protection goals.

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Public Outreach and Education

In order to ensure that Hawaii's people understand and have an opportunity to comment on DOH's environmental goals, strategies and indicators, we formed an outreach committee consisting of members from both the private and public sectors, the Goals Communication Team (GoComm). The GoComm advised us on the clarity and content of our public education materials on environmental goals, and assisted with the development of a public communication plan, including text and a slide show for use statewide. The "Goals" presentation has been repeated in many venues during the past two years, and has served well to introduce DOH's environmental management policies to a wide audience.

Subsequently, we expanded the scope of the GoComm to include review and comment on the contents of this plan, added members from a broader range of stakeholders, and renamed the group the Environmental Management Advisory Group (EMAG). The EMAG will continue to advise DOH on environmental policy matters, and has begun a second public outreach project, "Environmental Heroes." The Environmental Heroes project is funded by both donations and a grant from EPA ($10,000); funds are being used to develop and air a series of public service announcements on the value of pollution control and environmental protection.

EMAG continues to advise DOH on environmental pollicy

DOH managers and staff also frequently conduct outreach efforts on program-specific topics; these efforts are described in the individual program plans.

Conclusion

This plan was developed through extensive consultation between DOH staff and with numerous stakeholders interested in the environmental protection process. The DOH wishes to express much gratitude to those involved in the Environmental Management Advisory Group for volunteering many hours to provide substantial recommendations for improving this plan (see list of those involved below). This document is greatly improved because of your involvement.

The following chapters consist of program-specific plans drawn up by each of the DOH's environmental protection branches and offices. If the content seems overly technical and complicated, that is because the laws and science behind environmental protection are similarly complex. Questions regarding the plan can be directed to the Environmental Planning Office at (808) 586-4337.

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As a public health agency, DOH is mandated to protect the environment to ensure that human health is not compromised. However, environmental protection also includes protection of our ecosystems.

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